

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

We write to bring your attention to the dire situation in nursing homes and long-term care (LTC) facilities in New York and around the country, and we ask that you support these facilities, their residents, and their employees in the next coronavirus response package.

With over 1.2 million cases and 70,000 deaths to date in the United States, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has spared no community. Nursing homes and other long-term care providers, however, have been particularly devastated by this crisis, and the available data, which experts say almost certainly understates reality, reveals the crisis in these facilities: at least 16,000 LTC residents and staff have died and tens of thousands more have contracted the virus.¹ In our home state of New York, LTC residents and staff account for more than a quarter of counted deaths.²

We thank you for your leadership in providing relief to LTC providers in recovery packages, through advance Medicare payments, boosted Medicaid rates, and assistance with infection control and spread mitigation efforts, but these facilities still face staffing shortages and are

¹ Nadolny, Tricia L., and Marisa Kwiatkowski. "Our Patients Are Dropping like Flies: 16,000 Dead from COVID-19 in U.S. Nursing Homes." USA Today, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 1 May 2020, www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2020/05/01/coronavirus-nursing-homes-more-states-pressured-name-facilities/3062537001/.

² Wabc. "Coronavirus News: Nursing Home Deaths Represent 25% of All COVID-19 Fatalities in New York." ABC7 New York, 20 Apr. 2020, abc7ny.com/nursing-home-homes-new-york-coronavirus-in-ny/6115589/.

struggling to obtain the personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing supplies needed to properly protect their residents and workers. As negotiations continue on the next coronavirus response package, we encourage you to support nursing homes and LTCs and include provisions to help these facilities retain and appropriately compensate staff, acquire necessary PPE, increase testing capacity, and prevent further spread of the virus.

Thank you for your attention to this critical request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen M. Rice'.

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gregory W. Meeks'.

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grace Meng'.

Grace Meng
Member of Congress